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# JOB

## The Hero Par Excellence

By J. HARRY DEEMS,

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*DEDICATED*

*TO*

*THE SERVICE OF GOD*

*AND TO*

*THE MEMORY OF*

All of my loved ones—those who have passed beyond the evanescent changes of this variable life, and those who still tread with me the daily paths of militant experiences; also to all of my brethren and sisters in the glorious work of obedience to the loving Father, as well as to the salvation and edification of never dying souls, in Church, Sunday School and Community activities.

## FOREWORD

The simple grandeur and the grand simplicity of this noble Book having by the Spirit of God commended itself to my earnest perusal and diligent study, I have longed to incite in the minds of others who love the Word a desire for better acquaintance with and knowledge of these eloquently inspired and inspiring chapters of Job.

This is neither a commentary upon nor an exhaustive exposition of the ancient, helpful, interesting, wonderful and soul-exhilarating Book of Job; but only suggestive remarks from a layman endeavoring so to emphasize this most delightful book in the Word of God as to attract the earnest lay student of the Book of Books to the unexcelled beauty, the discovery of the depth of wisdom, the demonstration of well-founded faith, and the comforting assurance of the Divine Architect with which its sublime pages are filled.

How many Christians have never perused its every page! How few who have ever studied its deep mysteries and glistening riches! How many who have never included this incomparable work in their

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research! Although it belongs irrevocably to the Sacred Lore to which the Son of God and Son of Man referred when He uttered those emphatically important words, "Search the Scriptures," (John v, 39), how few revert to it as a necessary daily, soul-inspiring portion of the "All scripture given by inspiration of God." ( Tim. iii, 4.)

Desiring to render "honor to whom honor" is due, the Author would cheerfully acknowledge his indebtedness to the following well known Exegetes for inspiring aid in the preparation of these suggestive remarks: Jos. Parker, D. D., John F. Genung, D. D., F. N. Pelonbet, D. D., A. S. Barnes, D. D., George R. Noyes, John Eadie, D. D., LL. D., Wm. Smith, J. Drusius, Richard Green Moulton, D. D., E. F. Palmer, D. D., C. I. Schofield, D. D., Homer V. Sprague, Ph. D.

That these pages may enlist the cordial interest in, also the admiration, and the profound love and devoted study of many readers of the unexcelled and perhaps unequalled, yet so little known Book of Job, is the grateful and prayerful heart's desire of

THE AUTHOR.

# JOB

## THE HERO PAR EXCELLENCE.

### CHAPTER I.

*The Book of Job.*

Perhaps concerning no part of Scripture has there been a greater diversity of opinion amongst Biblical scholars than the Book of Job, and perhaps no book has been so little read and studied by the average child of God; yet without doubt it is a portion of that Scripture "given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii, 16), and just as advisable for or binding upon the intelligent, ambitious Christian is the perusal of this book of profound lore and great antiquity as that of any part of God's Word, concerning which He who "hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. i, 10), said: "Search the Scriptures" (John v, 39).

Let us consider some of the points about which there have been and still are great differences of

opinion amongst men of the highest distinction in learning, and, although we may not hope for absolute certainty on every point, yet on some points we may be quite positive, and on others we may attain a high degree of probability.

The following questions may be interesting for us to solve:

I. Was Job a real or fictitious character?

II. Where did Job live, or where was the land of Uz?

III. When did Job live?

IV. Who was the author of the Book of Job?

V. What is the character and design of the Book of Job?

## CHAPTER II.

### *Was Job a Real Character?*

Was Job a real or fictitious character, that is, only a type or prophet's similitude?

Some have doubted his real existence.

(1) Because by these the Book of Job has been supposed to be an allegory, as allegories and parables are not uncommon in the Scriptures.

(2) Because the statements about the possessions of Job, both before and after his trials, occur in round numbers, and generally include the sacred numbers seven and three; as seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she-asses; seven sons and three friends, the latter coming and sitting with him seven days and seven nights without saying a word to condole with him, although they had come expressly for that purpose; he had also three daughters before and after his trials, Chapters i and xlii.

(3) Because of the style in which the book is written. It is of the highest order of poetry. The speeches are elaborate, skillfully argued, arranged with great care, sententious, demonstrating very

particular observation, and unlike what might be said extemporaneously or unpremeditatedly. Although the arguments of the various speakers have a poetic character, and might never have been uttered in the exact form in which we now have them, still this would not invalidate the historic truth of the facts narrated about the existence and trials of Job. It is doubtless true that he lived and suffered as narrated, that the discussions actually occurred, yet it is not improbable that afterwards they were wrought by Job himself or some other person into the poetic form in which we find them. Subsequent to his trials he lived one hundred and forty years, and when fully recovered to his former vigor, during the leisure which he enjoyed he may have thought it worth while to present a history of all the events mentioned in connection with his life and experiences in a more perfect form and a more poetic cast. But the difficulty may be removed by a supposition entirely in accord with the nature of the case and the character of the Book. It is, that a sufficient interval of time may have intervened between the speeches to have given ample opportunity for carefully framed argument to meet the views which had been announced by the previous speaker. There is no proof that the whole argument in any case took place at one sitting, the entire

Book bearing evidence of most careful deliberation. There is no seeming hurry. The speakers follow one another in order, and no matter how keen and sarcastic their invectives, they are patiently heard and then all is carefully considered in the reply. This indeed seems as if there might have been ample time to arrange the reply before it was uttered. No one can prove that Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu were not able to compose the speeches attributed to them, nor that all the time necessary to compose them was not taken.

(4) Because after Job's restoration to perfect health his effects were just doubled; that is, his seven thousand sheep became fourteen thousand, his three thousand camels became six thousand, his five hundred yoke of oxen became one thousand, and his five hundred she-asses also became one thousand and again he had seven sons and three daughters. (Chap. xlii, 10-13.) As the statement in the Holy Record is that "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning," partly through the generosity of his friends and acquaintances, there is no improbability at all that his possessions were doubled. From these and perhaps other reasons the historical character of the Book of Job as well as the reality of the person of Job have been called into question, and have been and are believed by some to be only

a supposed case intended to illustrate the great question which the author of the poem purposed to examine, that is, Why does suffering on suffering befall the righteous?

Let us see what reasons there are for believing that Job was a real character and that the transactions recorded in the Book are historically true.

1. In the first two chapters of the Book and a part of the last chapter there are simple historical records and they declare Job's existence, and no statements are to be found in the Bible more clear and plain than these; this fact should be regarded as decisive unless there is some reason which does not appear on the face of the narrative for regarding it as allegorical.

2. The Scriptures prove his real existence. Thus in Ezekiel's message to the Jews while in captivity (Chapter xiv, 14, 16, 18, 20) there occurs this saying, "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it," (the land of Palestine) "they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters." Note well that this is not Ezekiel's language, but it is God who speaks, and the Prophet is simply the medium of this communication from Jehovah to the captive Jews. Job is here referred to as a real character as distinctly as Noah and

Daniel; all are mentioned by name as real men, as having souls, "they shall deliver but their own souls by their righteousness;" as having sons and daughters, "they shall deliver neither son nor daughter." A parallel passage occurs in Jeremiah, Chap. xv, 1, where Moses and Samuel are mentioned; as these are spoken of as real personages, so Job having been mentioned in the same manner by Ezekiel, there is no reasonable doubt of his existence. Then, too, he is mentioned by James in his epistle, Chap. v, 11. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job," just as he mentions Elijah, Chap. v, 17, "Elias (Elijah) was a man subject to like passions as we are." Thus as far as this historical record goes we have the same assurance that Job existed as we have of the existence of Noah, Daniel, Moses, Samuel and Elijah. In addition to the foregoing evidence which should be conclusive, we find a quotation from Job v, 13 in Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, Chap. iii, 19, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness," introduced by the usual formula in the New Testament, "It is written," showing that the writer regarded it as part of the inspired Word of God.

Now that God speaks of Job as having existed, he must have been a real character or the Infinite Father would have been in error, and this we cannot imagine, for such a belief would derogate from our well founded ideas concerning the perfection of

Deity, because however faulty *we* may be, *God* cannot err.

3. Specific names of persons and places are not such as would occur in a parable or an allegory. These particulars are not recorded of the parables of the Savior excepting that of the rich man and Lazarus, and the rich man's name is not given, only Lazarus; yet the latter name was so common amongst the Jews that he could not be located. In the parables of the Prodigal Son, the Nobleman who went to receive a kingdom, the unjust Steward, the ten Virgins, the good Samaritan, and many others, no names are given of persons or places where scenes are laid. In the Book of Job we have the names of many distinct specifications not necessary to illustrate the main truth in the poem. We have the names of Job and his friends as well as the places of their residence, Chap. ii 11; "Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite", also Chap. xxxii, 2, "Elihu the son of Barachel, the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram;" likewise there is express mention of the Sabeans and Chaldeans, Chap. i, 15, 17; the mention of the feasting of the sons and daughters of Job, his admonishing them and offering up special sacrifices for them, Chap. i, 4, 5; the destruction of the oxen, asses, sheep, camels and servants as well as of the house where the sons and daughters of Job were, Chap. i, 13-19; the names of his three daughters after

the return of prosperity, Chap. xlii, 13, 14; all of which circumstances we might expect concerning real transaction, and they conduce to impress upon us more deeply the feeling that Job was a living reality and not an allegorical myth.

The objections urged against this view are not sufficient to disprove the patriarch's real existence.

4. It is impossible to prove that no such transaction ever occurred as the account of the interview between God and Satan recorded in the first two chapters. The existence of the latter being is everywhere recognized in the Scriptures, and the account given of his character accords entirely with the general representation of him, and even if there be somewhat of poetic statement in the narrative of his introduction upon the scene, still it does not render the main account improbable. When the Bible says that God speaks to men, that He conversed with Adam, that He spake to the Serpent, (Genesis, Chap. iii), we are not to press these statements too literally, nor because they are not strictly literal do they invalidate the main facts, for there were facts and results following as if they had been literally true.

As the foregoing are the principal objections urged against the historical character of the Book, and do not seem to be well founded, it follows that it should be taken as historically true that Job actually lived and passed through the trials described in the Book.

## CHAPTER III.

*Where Did Job Live?*

In the Land of Uz. But where is Uz? East of Palestine, not a very great distance from the Sabeans and Chaldeans who could reach him in their predatory excursions, Chap. i, 15-17; north of the southern Arabians and west of the Euphrates River; it probably corresponded with the Arabian Desert of classical geography, or as much of it as lies north of 30th parallel of latitude.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *When Did Job Live?*

Probably no question concerning this man of heroic moral and spiritual stature has caused such a diversity of opinion and wide range of belief. Some assign to him a period of remote antiquity, near the time of the three great Hebrew Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or about 1900 B. C., that is, about 550 years after the deluge. Others, because of the similarity between some sentiments advanced by Job and the writings of the Royal Sage, think that he must have lived about or shortly after the time of Solomon, that is 1000 years B. C., and derived some of his opinions from Solomon's writings; but may not Solomon in his deep and varied researches have studied the philosophy of Job? Still others believe him to have been contemporary with Isaiah, or about 700 B. C. Yet others think he may have lived about 500 B. C.

For several reasons we are strongly inclined to adopt the first opinion expressed above.

1. His age. There was a gradual decline in the number of years of average human life from the flood

to Moses. According to this he must have lived before the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai, and even before the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.

2. All the traditions in Arabic and the testimony of Hebrew writers concur in assigning his life time to the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

3. From the book itself it is very clear that he lived before the departure from Egypt; this is evident because there is no allusion either to that remarkable event or to the wonders which preceded it, nor to the journey to Canaan. These stirring events are frequently referred to by the sacred writers, and as all this must have been known to the people of the country where Job lived, it is unaccountable that there is no reference to them if they had already occurred. Even if the Book were written subsequent to the exodus from Egypt, the Author of the Poem intended to represent the Patriarch as having lived before that wonderful event.

4. It is equally probable that he lived before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, because as these cities were in the vicinity of the country where Job lived, he certainly would have known of the great calamity visited upon the people on account of their sins and doubtless would have referred to this great catastrophe; moreover it was the very point main-

tained by the great Sufferer's friends, that God interposed by direct judgments to cut off the wicked—a popular fallacy disproven by the Savior many years thereafter in Luke xiii, 1-5.

5. There is no allusion to any Jewish rites, customs, manners, religious ceremonies, priesthood, fasts nor Sabbaths. It would have been almost impossible in a discussion covering the whole nature of sin, also the providential government of God and man's relation to Him, to have avoided all reference to His law had that law then been known.

6. The religion of Job is the same as that prevailing in the time of Abraham long before the institution of the Jewish system—a religion of sacrifices but without any officiating priest. In his time there was no priest, no temple, no consecrated altar. As the head of the family, Job presents the sacrifice in behalf of his children and friends, as did Noah and Abraham. This is just the religion which obtained amongst the Patriarchs until the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, hence it is natural to infer that Job lived anterior to that great occasion. Noah built an altar to Jehovah, (Gen. viii, 20), and Abraham himself offered sacrifices in the same manner, (Gen. xii, 7; xxii, 9. Sacrifices were offered to God, and the father of a family was the officiating priest of his own family and household.

7. The manners and customs described are those of the earliest Patriarchs.

8. The worship of the sun and moon is the only form of idolatry mentioned, which was beyond any doubt the most ancient, (Chap. xxxi, 26-28).

Drusius quoting a declaration from the Gemara, says, "Job lived in the days of Jacob, and was born when the children of Israel went down into Egypt, and when they departed thence he died. He lived therefore 210 years." This is only tradition, but it shows the ancient impression as to the time when he lived. The fore-going circumstances all point to a great antiquity for the life of Job, a period not remote from the age of Abraham and there is no other period of history in which these conditions all unite.

## CHAPTER V.

### *Who Was the Author of the Book of Job?*

The first circumstance noticeable to one in deciding the authorship of the Book is the fact that it differs materially from the usual style of Hebrew composition. The general cast of the book is Arabian. The allusions, metaphors and illustrations are not such as a Hebrew would make. Arabian deserts, streams failing from drought, wadys filled in the winter and dry in the summer, moving caravans that come regularly to the same place for water, for dwellings tents easily plucked up and removed, the dry and stinted shrubbery of the desert, the roaring of lions and other wild beasts, periodic rains, trees planted on the verge of running streams, robbers that rise before day and make their attack in early morning, the obligation of the avenger of blood, the claims of hospitality, the formalities of an Arabic court of justice, the respect due to an Emir or Arabic chief, the courtesy of manners which prevailed amongst the more elevated ranks in the Arabic tribes, appear everywhere in the Book.

A second consideration in determining the authorship of the Book is the fact that there are in it a

great many allusions to events which occurred before the exodus of Israel from Egypt, the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai and the establishment of Jewish institutions, and are of such a character as we find in the time of Noah and Abraham.

A third consideration is that there are no such allusions to events occurring after the exodus from Egypt and the establishment of Jewish institutions. A few remarks will demonstrate the verity of the latter observation. The Hebrew writers were remarkable for referring to events of their own history. The dealings of God with their nation were so filled with love, forbearance and favor that their writings constantly adduce His protective care and merciful treatment of them as a reason for being cheered in their captivity and looking for an ultimate deliverance therefrom; and in their freedom, liberty is made sweet by the memory of what their ancestors had suffered in the "house of bondage." In particular, the deliverance from Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the giving of the law on Sinai, the journey in the wilderness, the conquest of the land of Canaan and the destruction of their enemies constituted a never failing supply of material for their writers in all ages. Now it is very noticeable and even remarkable that there are no such allusions in the Book of Job to these events, as a Hebrew would make.

There is no reference to Moses, the great leader of the Israelites, to their bondage in Egypt, to the oppression of Pharaoh, to the destruction of his army in the Red Sea, to the rescue of the children of Israel, to the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, the perils of the wilderness, their settlement in the Promised Land, to the tabernacle of the ark of the covenant, the tables of the Law, the priesthood, cities of refuge, religious rites of the Hebrew people, their great national festivities or the names of the Jewish tribes.

The reasons suggested above are such as seem to leave no rational doubt that the work was composed before the departure from Egypt although there have been some, such as Luther, Grotius and Doederlin who suppose that Solomon was the author, others, such as Umreit and Noyes believe it was written by some unknown person about the time of the Babylonish captivity. Warburton thought it was the work of Ezra; yet others as Rosenmuller, Spanheim and Richter held the opinion that it was written by some Hebrew author about the time of Solomon: amongst others, Lightfoot held that the Book was a production of Elihu who comes into notice in the twenty-second chapter, but he does not appear to have understood the design of the trials that came upon Job, yet whoever wrote the first two chapters

and the last one, evidently saw through the whole affair, and comprehended partly the reason why the Patriarch was permitted to experience those great afflictions. Had Elihu known the reasons, they would have been suggested by him in his speech.

The supposition that Job himself was the author of the Book, though slightly modified by someone subsequently, will meet all the demands of the case. This will agree with the use of Arabic words now unknown in Hebrew; with the references to the nomadic habits and modes of living of the times; also with the statements about the simple modes of worship and the mention of the sciences and arts, and with the absence of all allusions to the exodus from Egypt, the giving of the Law and the peculiar customs and institutions of the Hebrews.

Beside the general considerations the following facts may aid in showing this opinion to be probable in the highest degree.

1. Job lived after his calamities one hundred and forty years, thus affording him ample leisure to make a record of his trials.

2. The art of making books although not like that of the present day, was known to the Patriarch himself, Chap. xix, 23 24; xxxi, 35. Understanding this art and having abundance of leisure, it is not sur-

prising that he should have recorded what had taken place during his remarkable and unsurpassed trials, preferring this to uncertain tradition.

3. The record of his own imperfections, his impatience, his irreverence and of the rebuke from Almighty God, are characteristic of his frankness and honesty; just as Moses and the other sacred writers throughout the Scriptures never attempted to conceal their own faults.

4. In his own speeches, going in everything immeasurably beyond all the other speakers, excepting God, he proves conclusively that he was abundantly able to compose the Book. Every circumstance points to Job as the author of this unique Book, unparalled in antiquity and unexcelled in wisdom by any other book in the Bible, excepting the mention made of his age and death; these were doubtless added by some unknown person just as the thirty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, which details the age and death of Moses, was added to that book by some unknown hand.

But one other supposition seems necessary to be considered, and that is that Moses, during his forty years spent in various parts of Arabia, found the Book, and recognizing the worth of it, adopted it as a help in accomplishing the great task to which

he was called. The style is so different from that of Moses that the authorship cannot be imputed to him; then, too, the allusions to Arabic customs and manners are not such as would likely have been familiar to Moses; yet his previous training at the court of Pharoah, doubtless, prepared him to appreciate and look with interest upon any literary document having the stamp of uncommon genius. Had the work been written by the great Lawgiver we might have supposed there would have been frequent references therein which would have betrayed its Egyptian origin, yet of these there are none. But with all that pertained to the desert—the keeping of flocks and herds, the nomadic or wandering mode of life, the method of plunder and robbery, the author seems to be familiar. On the whole, it seems highly probable that the Book was written by Job himself during the time of rest and prosperity which succeeded his trials, and came to the knowledge of Moses in Arabia and by him was adopted to aid the Hebrews in their day of trial and hardship to submit wholly to the will of God, and to give them the assurance that He would yet appear to crown with abundant blessings His own people, however much they might have to contend with affliction and adversity.

The historical facts were probably learned by Moses during his sojourn in Midian and he may have revised the Book with additions, consequently it was allowed by the Jews as a part of their Scriptures. Thus we have the Mosaic edition of Job, the most ancient literary production in existence, and one than which none other surpasses it in profound learning, properly referred to by Carlyle as "A noble Book, all men's Book."

## CHAPTER VI.

*What is the Character and Design of the Book?*

The poem bears the marks of a regular design or plan, the trichotomy or its division into three parts appearing not only in respect to the longer portions, but also in respect to the shorter sub-divisions. Thus we have the three grand divisions:

1. The Prologue,
2. The Poem proper, and
3. The Epilogue or conclusion.

The poem also presents three leading sub-divisions:

1. The controversy of Job and his three friends,
2. The speeches of Elihu, who offers himself as umpire between Job and his three friends, and
3. The address of God who decides the question at issue.

There are three series of arguments between Job and his three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite; three speeches in the final address of Job; the discussion was carried on through three days or sessions, probably with a considerable interval between them.

Jehovah also makes three addresses. Lastly, the Epilogue contains a similar sub-division: (1) Job's justification, (2) his reconciliation with his friends through his prayers for them, (3) his restoration to prosperity.

The prologue or introduction and the epilogue or conclusion are historical and may have been written by Moses and added to the intervening portion written by Job. The whole Book is in poetry excepting the prologue, which includes the first two chapters and the first and second verses of the third chapter; also the first five verses and part of the sixth verse of chapter thirty-two, and the epilogue which includes the last eleven verses of chapter forty-two.

The Book may be said to consist of seven parts:

I. The Prologue, Chapter i, ii, 8.
II. Job and his wife, ii, 9, 10.
III. Job and his three friends, ii, 11—xxxi, 40.
IV. Job and Elihu, xxxii, 1—xxxvii, 24.
V. Jehovah and Job, xxxviii, 1—xli, 34.
VI. Job's final answer, xlii, 1-6.
VII. The Epilogue, xlii, 7-17.

Job as introduced to us is rated as a "perfect and upright" man, "one that feared God and eschewed evil." Suddenly he was overwhelmed with almost

unparalleled calamity. All that he possessed was at once swept away; his oxen and she-asses were taken by the Sabeans, and those who attended them were slain by the sword; lightning struck and killed his sheep and those attending them; his camels were carried away by the Chaldeans and they slew those having charge of them. His sons and daughters were feasting at the elder brother's house when a tornado struck it, and in the ruin all were killed. Then we have the record, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly," Chap. i, 22.

Subsequently he was visited with disease of the most distressing nature, painful, offensive and humilitating, known as the black leprosy (to distinguish it from the more common disorder, called white leprosy) which involved the necessity of his separation from society, all of which was such as deeply to humble a man of the rank and dignity of Job; consequently he betook himself to an ash heap at some distance from his friends and acquaintances, there to endure and to weep alone as "he sat down among the ashes," Chap. ii, 7, 8.

At that time it was that his wife advised him to "curse God and die;" but the calm firmness of his reply assures us of his undiminished faith in Jehovah when he says, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive

good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips," Chap. ii, 9, 10.

Three of his friends having heard of his great misfortunes, came from afar, having "made an appointment together to come tomorrow with him and to comfort him" as he sat upon the ash-heap. They were Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. So surprised were they at his appearance when afar off that at first they did not know him, but as soon as they recognized him they wept, rent their mantles and sprinkled dust upon their heads; they sat down upon the ground with him for seven days and seven nights, none speaking a word to him because "his grief was very great." Chap. ii, 11-13.

Eliphaz seems to have been the oldest of Job's friends; he is a religious dogmatist, and on him falls the main burden of the argument that God's retribution in this world is perfect and certain, and that consequently suffering must be a proof of previous sin. His style is bold and graphic, and he says many true things (as also the others do) and often rises into eloquence, but he is harsh and cruel, implying, in his speeches, hypocrisy on the part of Job. The great truth brought out by him is the unapproachable majesty and purity of God. He is

the mildest of Job's accusers, yet while his accusations are conducted with great art and urbanity of manner, they are severely cruel and bitingly sarcastic.

Bildad thinks Job a hypocrite, using much harshness in his language and much severity in his reproof; he assumes that the great Sufferer and his family had been guilty of great sins, that his children had been cut off because of their crimes; being more harsh and less argumentative than Eliphaz, yet agreeing substantially with the latter in his opinion that Job was a hypocrite; his criticisms are characterized by great severity and he is unkind in his manner as well as uncharitable in his views.

Zophar, having less ability, gentleness and refinement than either of the other speakers, seems to think Job both a hypocrite and a liar. Like them, he assumes that Job had sinned, and assures him that if he will repent and return to Jehovah, he should have prosperity and happiness again. This really is the trend of all their speeches, and in this they all heartily agree, notwithstanding minor differences, insisting that the Patriarch is a bad man, a hypocrite, although outwardly good; otherwise his sufferings would be unjust. Although he himself is the sufferer, Job will not thus accuse the justice of God, and his defense of himself is perfect.

Before Jehovah, however, he knows he is helpless and undone, and while he admits (Chap. ix, 33) there is no daysman, that is umpire between God and him, yet his firm abiding, confiding, fully trusting faith in the loving Father is rewarded later by a revelation of a coming Redeemer and the resurrection, Chap. xix, 25-27.

Job successfully refutes the arguments of his three friends that he is a secret sinner, but the question, "Why are the righteous afflicted?" still remains; however, the solution of this mysterious yet true fact is solved in the latter part of the Book.

Elihu seems to have a more just and accurate conception of why the righteous are afflicted than Eliphaz, Bildad or Zophar, because he has a higher conception of God Himself. The three friends believe Him to be petty and exacting in His relations with His creatures, but Elihu's idea of the great Creator is that He is noble, just and merciful, ever ready to receive the repentant erring one. His discourse, however, is marred by self-assertiveness, and although he is not classed at the last by Jehovah with the three friends of Job, Chap. xlii, 7, yet God brings against him the charge that he "darkeneth counsel by words," Chap. xxxviii, 2, the very same complaint that Elihu had brought against Job, Chaps. xxxiv, 35; xxxv, 16.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *A Brief Analysis of the Chapters.*

The Book of Job is probably the oldest of the books of Holy Writ and certainly composed before the giving of the Law.

In the first two chapters there is a statement concerning the character of Job, his family and prosperity, his piety and that of his family, Satan's theory that Job was good because prosperous, also the mystery of God's permissive will. Following this is an account of the destruction of his family and property by the Sabeans, Chaldeans, lightning and a tornado, as well as his being afflicted with the black leprosy.

Although the "patience of Job" had, doubtless, become a proverbial expression before the writing of the Epistle of James, A. D. 60, James v, 16, yet when the Patriarch made his first speech, Chap. iii, we find him bitterly cursing the day of his birth, indulging in murmuring and complaint, and wishing for death, all of which caused his three friends to suspect him of insincerity, indeed of being a hypocrite forsaken of God.

Eliphaz led the way, Chaps. iv, v, in the argument following, first stating the honorable and honored position from which Job had fallen, then reproving him for lack of religion, suggesting whether a life of piety would not be attended with corresponding prosperity, and whether his misfortunes and sufferings were not demonstrative of his guilt.

In Chapters vi and vii Job replies to Eliphaz excusing his desire for death, reproving his friends for their unkindness, mentioning God's watchfulness, and making an earnestly touching appeal for pity. It is in Chapter vii, verse 16, that he uses the beautiful and, to the Christian, the inspiring expression, "I would not live alway," which has been eternally memorialized in the following exquisite hymn of that title, written by Rev. Wm. A. Muhlenberg, D. D., 1824.

I would not live alway, I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way.
The few fleeting mornings that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's sorrows—enough for its cheer.

I would not live alway; no, welcome the tomb;
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom;
There sweet be my rest, till He bid me arise,
To hail Him in triumph descending the skies.

Who, who would live alway, away from his God,
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns?

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet;
While anthems · rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.

Substantially the same feeling is shown in this speech of Job as was manifested in Chapter iii, and while there is great beauty, yet there is much which cannot be sanctioned.

Eliphaz was followed in the same order during each sitting of the debate by his two friends. Job being most deeply concerned in the issue, and having no one to stand by him, responds to each one of the speakers. Three successive series of arguments gave each one of the friends of Job the privilege of saying all he wished to say, thus permitting him to speak three times, each speech being replied to by Job who consequently spoke nine times; Eliphaz, then Job; Bildad, then Job, and Zophar, then Job, excepting in the last series when Zophar failed to speak, thus silently acknowledging defeat and conceding no reply could be made to Job's arguments.

They accuse him of want of religion, of presumption, of impatience, of divers sins; to all of which he replied vigorously denying these imputations, expressing his innocence of what they accuse him, declaring his firm, immovable faith in God, although bemoaning his calamities and complaining of life. He entreats to know his own sins and God's purpose in permitting his affliction, declares his belief in the resurrection, also that the wicked often prosper here, going unpunished, but their judgment is in another world.

Bildad, in his first address, answers Job in Chapter viii, claiming that no one can be just with God, and that if He should enter into judgment with man, man could not give a justifiable reason for one of a thousand of his offenses; also alleging antiquity to prove the certain destruction of the hypocrite, applying God's just dealing to Job, thus indicating his belief in the hypocrisy of the suffering Patriarch.

In Chapters ix and x we have the answer of Job to Bildad's first speech in which he does not pretend to be faultless, but claims entire innocence of the secret sins with which his friends had charged him, asserting most positively that he is not a hypocrite as they had said. In the speeches of Job at times there are evidences that he is agitated with contending passions, as there is apparent inconsist-

ency in his language and thoughts. He admits in general the truth of what Bildad had said, that man ought not to sit in judgment on what Jehovah does or may permit, but should make supplication to Him. Job has full confidence in God and demonstrates conclusively that he is a pious man, yet when contemplating his own sorrows he becomes impatient, indulging in language of murmuring and complaint.

Chapter xi contains the first speech of Zophar. He thinks Job both hypocritical and untruthful, taking it for granted that he has sinned and thus caused his misfortunes. Zophar is less argumentative than Eliphaz, and his speeches are little more than a repetition of what was said by his friends, assuring Job that if he would repent and turn to God he would be prospered and once again become a respected and an honored man.

In Chapters xii, xiii and xiv Job not only answers Zophar, but also the other two, Eliphaz and Bildad, and is so disgusted with their failure to convict him of hypocrisy that he becomes very sarcastic, saying in Chapter xii, verse 2, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you;" affirming also in verse 3 that he understood the points on which they insisted as well as they; then proceeding to discourse of the Most High in such a way as was cal-

culated to make them ashamed of their narrow views. He speaks of the universal sovereignty of God; says that the knowledge of Him is to be learned from the beasts, the earth and the whole order of events; admits that His agency is seen everywhere, but maintains that His dispensations are not in exact accordance with the character of man, and that men are not treated according to their deserts in this life. He expresses his earnest wish to place his cause entirely in the hands of Jehovah, affirming his earnest faith in the Wise Dispenser of all events, though He should slay him. In this reply to his three friends there is mingled complaint, remonstrance, despondency, doubt and surprising faith. Thus Job closes the first series of the controversy, feeling that God and man were against him, and that he had no real comforter.

Chapter xv contains the second discourse of Eliphaz and also begins the second series of the controversy. He accuses Job of vanity, of unprofitable talk, of having cast off the fear of God, of arrogance and self-confidence, giving a graphic description of the misery of a wicked man, mentioning so many circumstances applicable to Job, that the latter readily perceived the unkind allusions of the speaker, and by him were keenly felt, because Eliphaz announced them as the result of long observation, and

that they were strengthened by the well-known maxims of tradition and antiquity.

In Chapters xvi and xvii we have the reply of Job to this second speech of Eliphaz, accusing him and his friends of unmercifulness and heaping up "vain words." He delivers another affecting description of his calamities yet maintaining his innocence, stating that if his friends were in his place he could shake his head at and despise them, yet he would not do it, but endeavor to comfort them. He appeals from men to God, feeling that the unmerciful dealing of men with the afflicted may astonish but not discourage the righteous.

Chapter xviii gives us Bildad's second speech, containing a string of Oriental proverbial expressions implying that where great calamities visit a man there is the most conclusive proof that he is wicked; he details many of these calamities, and it is very evident that he means to apply all this to Job; that it would add very materially to the latter's trials is very clear, because his rejoinder in the following chapter contains many expressions indicating his almost insufferable anguish.

In Chapter xix Job complains of his friends' cruelty, declaring very positively that his sufferings had been permitted by God for some reason unknown to him, but should not be considered as evidence that

he was the guilty person they had accused him of being. On account of his great trials he craves pity of his friends; afterwards inspired by his sublime faith in the Great Creator he announces his belief in the resurrection (Verses 25-27) and closes by warning his accusers that they should fear the wrath of Heaven because of their treatment of a pious sufferer.

Zophar's second discourse, Chapter xx, seems laden with tradition and proverb; in it he claims that from the creation of man, "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment," (Verse 5), and proceeds to show this by numerous and striking examples. This speech is remarkable for its severity, which, doubtless, Zophar intended to be applied to Job; but the former does not notice the unbounded confidence of the latter in God, which he had expressed in the preceding chapter.

In Chapted xxi Job replies not only to Zophar, but also to his two friends, Eliphaz and Bildad. They all had endeavored by specious argumentation to prove that the wicked are visited in this life for their sins with condign punishment by Jehovah, and had asserted that when a man suffers much it is proof positive that he is wicked. Job defends the contrary opinion and mentions how in many ways

sometimes the wicked are eminently prosperous, although sometimes their destruction is manifest; but that their just doom must be in a future state. He thus refutes the view that he is afflicted because he is a sinner. Having attacked and successfully controverted the main argument of his opponents, after this the controversy becomes more feeble until they are completely silenced and cease even to attempt to reply to him.

The old theory—that Job had sinned—is the main subject in the third speech of Eliphaz, Chapter xxii, in which he openly charges the Patriarch with aggravated guilt, which before had rather been implied than said. In this discourse there is much severity, and far more than is usual that is personal, for the accuser specifies various and flagrant violations by Job of the laws of God and the demands of humanity, yet concludes by exhorting him to repentance, to acquaint himself with God, promising that He will show mercy to him.

In Chapters xxiii and xxiv we have Job's answer to the third and last address of Eliphaz. He longs to appear before Jehovah, having implicit confidence in His mercy and appealing to His omniscience for a vindication of his innocency of life amongst men. He makes one more attempt to convince his adversaries that the All-wise Father does not deal with

the wicked in this life as they deserve, and indeed that many of them live in prosperity; but that they will meet the reward of their iniquity hereafter. All this being a generally accepted fact, it virtually ended the controversy. Eliphaz and Zophar made no further response and Bildad made only a feeble effort in the next chapter, showing he had really nothing more to say.

The brief rejoinder of Bildad in Chapter xxv concludes what the three friends of Job have to say, for Zophar does not even attempt to make further reply. This speech is composed simply of a few sententious remarks, as if he felt he must say something, but hardly knew what to say, for he does not seem to make any additional effort to confute Job's argument. The feebleness of this attempt encourages the afflicted Servant of God to the expression of the nobly triumphant sentiments contained in the following six chapters.

In Chapter xxvi Job begins a reply to all that had been said by his three friends, and terminates the controversy. He begins sarcastically on the last speaker (Bildad) as having offered nothing relevant to the dispute between them, nothing to relieve his mind in its great trouble and almost depth of despair sometimes, reproving him for his uncharitable spirit, and acknowledging with his friends the power

of God to be infinite, showing also that he could even go beyond them in his descriptions of the divine power and majesty.

This speech of Job is the longest of all the addresses delivered during this debate between him and his three friends; it continues for six chapters, ending with Chapter xxxi.

At this point it seems that Zophar should have answered Job, as it was his turn in the regular course of the dispute, but he was silent. As nothing was said in reply to the suffering Patriarch at this time, in Chapter xxvii he resumes his remarks. He solemnly reasserts his innocence, denying once more that his afflictions were proof of extraordinary guilt, stating that the hypocrite is without hope, and that, although the wicked frequently prosper and the innocent suffer in this world, yet the time will come when the very blessings of the unrighteous will prove a curse to themselves, and they will not go unpunished forever.

Chapter xxviii contains a number of references to natural science, showing man's surprising discoveries concerning them, yet Job claims that they disclosed nothing at all of God's administration nor of His dealings with mankind; therefore true wisdom is to be found only in the fear of the Lord, "a profound veneration for the Almighty." Answering

the false charges of Eliphaz (Chapter xxii, 6-9) Job descants in Chapter xxix very beautifully upon his former prosperity and happiness, when the young and the aged, the princes and nobles, the poor and the rich, the widow and orphan, the blind and the lame rendered him the highest honor and gave to him unbounded respect. "It is the image of a venerable patriarch, a wise counsellor, a universal benefactor, a composer of difficulties, a man enjoying universal confidence and affection—a beautiful description of piety and its effects everywhere, and of the respect shown to wisdom, virtue and beneficence in all ages."

The Patriarchal Hero cites in Chapter xxx a comparison of his condition with his former affluence and joy, the lack of respect and honor which he had formerly enjoyed. The very dregs of society now made him their song, even the youths joining with others in adding to his calamities. He had cried in vain to God, and now was in the deepest distress, he was "a brother to dragons and a companion to owls," (Verse 30).

Chapter xxxi portrays the high moral standard which characterized and governed the life of Job, reminding us of the heart-searching demands laid down by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, (Matthew, Chapters v, vi and vii). This chapter con-

cludes the reply of Job, thus closing the argument, and is a beautiful vindication of his private life, as well as a fine illustration of what was regarded in the patriarchal times as constituting true piety. He specifies chastity, sincerity of life, uprightness and purity of life, fidelity to the marriage vow, faithfulness to his servants, beneficence to the poor, the widow and the fatherless, freedom from idolatry, kindness to his enemies, hospitality, freedom from secret sin, honesty towards others in the purchase of ground. Having thus proved his integrity, he considered his character as vindicated and had no more to say.

Although his friends had come quite a distance to comfort Job, yet their dismal failure is still memorialized by the contemptuous expression "Job's comforters." Wearied and worried by their persistent attempts to prove his extraordinary wickedness because of overwhelming calamities, he stoutly protested his innocence and manifested an earnest desire to carry his cause up to God that he might get a hearing before Him, confident that the merciful Father would decide in his favor, thus creating the impression upon his three friends that he was self-righteous.

Now there appears upon the scene, in Chapter xxxii, Elihu, a younger man who comes with much

modesty, yet with greater pretensions. Whether he came with the others to express his sympathy with Job, or whether he was a personal friend, or whether he was just incidentally present at this discussion is not even intimated. He himself states his reasons for speaking. (1) His wrath was kindled against Job because he justified himself rather than God (Verse 2), having indulged in severe reflections on the divine dealings; (2) he considered the three friends of Job equally to be blamed, because they had unsparingly condemned the great Sufferer, yet had not been able to reply to his arguments. The first six verses are prose; the remainder as well as the succeeding chapters of Elihu's speech, concluding with Chapter xxxvii, are poetry.

Because wisdom comes not necessarily from age he excuses the boldness of his youth; his mind being greatly excited, he could contain himself no longer. He tells Job's friends that it was incumbent upon them to have met and overcome his arguments because the Patriarch's words had not been directed against him, but since they had been completely silenced, he felt called upon to express his opinions, promising to be impartial, with no disposition to flatter.

In Chapter xxxiii the discourse is addressed entirely to Job, the main design of which is to con-

vince him that his views of God were erroneous, also to state the real design of affliction which Elihu thinks neither Job nor his friends understood, the latter believing it was a mere punishment. Job had antagonized this opinion, but was unable to tell why good men are afflicted; sometimes seeming to think it a mere matter of God's sovereignty, then again that the Heavenly Father took pleasure in subjecting him to trials without sufficient cause, and still at other times he held that Jehovah would yet vindicate the afflicted. Elihu insisting that none of them understood the true object of affliction, contends it was to bring about results in daily living, which nothing else would accomplish, and if the afflicted would repent of their sins and turn to God He would be merciful to them.

With sincerity and meekness, Elihu offers himself to reason with Job instead of God, excusing the Almighty from giving to man an account of His ways, and chiding the Patriarch for his severe reflections on the divine dealings. He claims that even if man could not see the reason for God's doings, he should acquiesce in them; that He often calls men by afflictions, and if these are received in the proper spirit He will accept and forgive the erring sons of toil. Elihu calls on Job to reply if he has anything to say, but if not, he would teach him what true wisdom is.

Finding that Job had nothing to answer, Elihu, in Chapter xxxiv, addresses particularly the three friends, considering the sentiments expressed by the Patriarch, accusing him of charging God with injustice, claiming that the Omnipotent Ruler of the universe cannot be unjust. All men being under the notice of Jehovah, the wicked cannot escape and elude the vigilance of the Omniscient Governor of all creation. He charges Job with rebellion and insists that man must humble himself before God.

Chapter xxxv is a continuation of the speech of Elihu. God is supreme, and so exalted that He can reap no advantage from the service of man, nor can He be injured by the disobedience of man, therefore it should be presumed He is impartial, and all should submit to Him. Many who cry to Him in their troubles and are not promptly heard, should at once realize it may be because their prayers are not offered in faith. God cannot be and is not indifferent to the welfare of His true children.

Elihu is yet speaking in Chapter xxxvi, and shows how God is just in all His ways, being watchful over the conduct of all men, endeavoring to reclaim the guilty and inducing them to forsake their sin. He charges Job with being obstinate and refusing to repent of his sins under the chastisements of Jehovah. In this view of the nature and design of

affliction he differs somewhat from the friends of Job. They held it was full proof of hypocrisy; that in his former life he had been a man of eminent guilt. Elihu maintained it was disciplinary, that upon his repentance the Sufferer would again enjoy the divine favor; that the reason he had experienced such great trials and for so long, was that the discipline had failed of its object.

He reminds Job that God is wise and His works are to be magnified, referring to the rain, the dew, the clouds, the thunder and the vapor to show that we cannot understand His wonderful creations. He is beyond our comprehension and we should bow submissively to His will.

Chapter xxxvii is a continuation of the argument in the latter part of the preceding one, to demonstrate the majesty and glory of God. His works are inscrutable. Elihu refers to the thunder storm, the snow and the rain, the whirlwind and cold, clouds, the warmth of his own garments, the sky and the fair weather. In all these wonderful works His majesty, power, justice, wisdom and love are manifest, yet past finding out, therefore man should fear and adore Him, submitting to the Almighty Sovereign his understanding and heart.

In Chapter xxxviii the Exalted Ruler of the great universe is heard addressing Job from the midst of

a tempest; not as the latter had hoped, to vindicate him, but to bring him to a proper state of mind, reproving the Patriarch's presumption which had characterized his mention of the divine dealings, also his utter incompetency to judge of the ways of Jehovah; yet at the close of the scene God approves of the general spirit of Job in preference to that of his friends, and restores him to greater prosperity than he had enjoyed before his afflictions. The appeal in this chapter is made by the Omnipotent Father to show how incomprehensible is the Great Creator of all things animate and inanimate, and He requires Job to explain some of the well known works in nature, the argument being, if he could not explain those matters which are before his eyes daily, it would be presumption for him to claim the ability to make clear the purposes of the Great Jehovah. To illustrate this, God mentions the formation of the earth, confining the sea within its bounds, the formation and distribution of light and darkness, the formation of snow, hail, lightning, storm, rain, ice, the rising and setting of the stars, the instincts of the animal kingdom.

Chapter xxxix continues the argument begun at verse 39 of the previous chapter, drawn from the habits, instincts and power of the animal creation. God here cites the wild goats of the rocks, the wild

ass, the unicorn, ostrich, horse, hawk and eagle, designing to show how incompetent man is to pronounce on His doings.

In Chapter xl God rebukes and silences Job out of the whirlwind in language of incomparable grandeur for his presumption in contending with Him, and for the utterances he had used, convincing the Patriarch by His mighty works of his own ignorance and impotence compared with Him, the Creator of all things, the Almighty Jehovah. Whereupon Job, still confiding implicitly in his Heavenly Father, acknowledges the omnipotence of God, expresses his guilt, and humbles himself before his unerring Maker. God then continues the argument in proof of His own power and glory; the power being illustrated by the statement of the immense strength of the behemoth—elephant as some suppose, or hippopotamus as others believe.

The argument of the previous chapter is completed in Chapter xli by calling Job's attention to the leviathan (crocodile) as one of the principal of the animal creation. A Being who could make such an animal and govern his movements must be a Being of great power and glory, to Whom man should render great reverence and before Whom he should be awed into silence. No reference is made to the reason for afflictions. This sublime argument is sim-

ply to show the impropriety of murmuring against One so eminent and potential as God, and to teach calm assent to the manifestations of His will.

Chapter xlii, the closing one of the book, is composed partly of poetry and partly of prose. The first part (in poetry) consisting of six verses, contains Job's confession that he had erred. He acknowledges that he had said things he did not understand, but now his apprehension of the Almighty was clear and bright, thus the desired effect of all his sufferings and afflictions had been produced upon this ancient Servant of God.

The second part of this chapter, consisting of eleven verses, is in prose, in which the Supreme Ruler pronounces the opinions held by Job's friends to be erroneous, deciding on the whole, in favor of Job as to the controversy between them, which decision means that great suffering is no evidence of special wickedness, nor is marked prosperity a conclusive proof that a man is righteous. As those friends of his had said much to cause him poignant anguish, God commanded them to take a sacrifice to Job for a burnt offering, promising that the latter would pray for them, and that they would be accepted through the intercession of this glorious old Saint.

Then the Loving Father rewarded the good old Patriarch of inviolable faith by doubling his former possessions, restoring him to high position in the respect and affection of all his relatives, former friends and acquaintances, and blessed him with a second family as numerous as his first. Thus thoroughly vindicated and honored, he lived until his eyes beheld a happy and large posterity—"his sons and his sons' sons, even four generations," then dies at last, "being old and full of days," verses 16, 17.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The Advance of the Arts and Sciences in the Time of Job.*

As an illustration of the progress of society and the advance of the arts and sciences in the time of Job, also in order to understand the Book in the most intelligent manner, it may be of interest to notice the mention of these, showing the improvement along so many lines which the world, especially Babylon, Egypt and localities influenced by their civilization had acquired at this very early age. No exact order can be observed, nor is there any indication in the poem which of the things specified had the priority in point of time.

1. Geography, or the natural political divisions of the earth; Chaps. xxiii, 8; xxvi, 10; xxxviii, 18.

2. Cosmology, or the structure and support of the earth; Chaps. ix, 6; xxvi, 7, 11.

3. Metereology, including the Aurora Borealis, Chap. xxxvii, 21-23; and physical geography, tornadoes, Chaps. xxxvi, 32, 33; xxxvii, 1-5; the dew, xxxviii, 28; clouds and rain, xxxvi, 27-29; snow, frost, hail and ice, xxxviii, 22, 23, 39; dawning of

the morning, xxxviii, 12-14; phenomena of light and darkness, xxxviii, 19, 20; the sea, xxxviii, 8-11.

4. Astronomy, so anciently and closely observed by a pastoral people and largely enhanced by the tending of flocks at night under a clear, oriental sky, Chaps. ix, 7-9; xxxviii, 31-33.

5. Mining operations, Chap. xxviii, 1-11.

6. Writing, engraving and coining, Chaps. xix, 23, 24; xxxi, 35, 36; xlii, 11.

7. Precious stones, onyx, sapphire, coral, crystal, rubies and topaz, Chap. xxviii, 16-19.

8. Music, Chaps. xxi, 12; xxx, 31.

9. The medical art, Chap. xiii, 4.

10. Hunting, Chap. xviii, 7-13.

11. The military art; poisoned arrows, Chap. vi, 4; the shield, xv, 26; methods of attack and capture of a walled city, xvi, 12-14; works cast up by a besieging army, xix, 12; the iron weapon and bow of steel, xx, 24; and the war horse, xxxix, 19-25.

12. Modes of husbandry, Chaps. i, 14; xx, 17; xxix, 6; xxxi, 38-40.

13. Methods of traveling, Chaps. vi, 15-20; ix, 25, 26.

14. Zoology. (1) Insects: the spider, Chap. viii, 14, 15; the moth. iv, 18, 19; xxvii, 18. (2) Reptiles:

the asp and viper, xx, 16. (3) Birds or fowl: the vulture, xxviii, 7; raven, xxxviii, 41; the stork and ostrich, xxxix, 13-18; eagle and hawk, xxxix, 26-30; owl, xxx, 29. (4) Beasts: camel, sheep, ox and she-ass, i, 3; xlii, 12; the lion, iv, 10-11; wild ass, vi, 5; xxxix, 5-8; the dog, xxx, 1; jackal (dragon), xxx, 29; mountain goat and hind, xxxix, 1-4; the horse, xxxix, 19-25; behemoth (or hippopotamus) xl, 15-24, and leviathan (or crocodile), Chap. xli.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *The Design of the Book.*

The design of the Book of Job seems to be to prove that in all dealings of Providence with His children, with those who really do trust in Him, who have endeavored to live an upright life, the trials, disappointments, adversities and afflictions which He permits us to experience are primarily for our ultimate good, for the testing and upbuilding of genuinely good character.

There are two considerations which would have relieved the Patriarchial Hero's embarrassment, and which we, living in these latter days of great spiritual opportunities and much clearer revelation of the divine government, can appreciate. (1) Many of the dispensations of the Good Father to His children are disciplinary and allowed to test them in order to discover to the world their pure gold, and thus to demonstrate the real value of faithful, pertinacious devotion to Him and to the principles inculcated by honest attachment to and cheerful faith in the Wise Dispenser of all that is good. (2) It is desired to show that true virtue is not based on sel-

fishness, and that real piety will bear trials to which it may be subjected; to show the duty of perfect submission to the will of God even when we cannot understand the mystery of all His doings, for He always proves Himself in the end to be the friend of the righteous; yet not because we expect reward, but because He is God, consequently boundless in wisdom, infinite in His fatherly love towards us, His erring creatures, and devotedly interested in our welfare. Though the good may suffer here, they will be abundantly recompensed hereafter; but however prosperous the wicked may be here, the divine dealings with them in the future state will be entirely according to their character.

While perusing the Book of Job let us remember that these truths were not then clearly revealed. The speakers had not the same knowledge of the divine government, the design of affliction and the doctrine of the future state which we have under the Christian dispensation. These were appropriately reserved for the brighter period in the history of the world when the light of Christianity should arise.

Kitto says, "The Book of Job is not only one of the most remarkable in the Bible, but in literature. As was said of Goliath's sword, 'There is none like it, none in ancient or modern literature.'"

J. A. Froude says, it is "A book which will one day perhaps be seen towering up alone far above all the poetry of the world."

In his Heroes and Hero Worship, Carlyle says, it is "One of the grandest things ever written with pen.—A noble Book; all men's Book!—Grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody and repose of reconcilement.—Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind.—There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit."

Yes, yes, the Book is ours. Nearly four thousand years have gone into the irrevocable past since this Patriarch lived, yet the sublime beauty of the poetry in this Book stands unsurpassed, even unrivaled.

Barnes says, "As a mere specimen of composition, apart from all questions of its theological bearing, as the oldest book in the world, as reflecting the manners, habits and opinions of an ancient generation, as illustrating more than any other book extant the state of the sciences, the ancient views of astronomy, geology, geography, natural history, and the advances made in the arts, this book has a higher value than can be attached to any other record of the past, and demands the profound attention of those who would make themselves familiar with the history of the race. The theologian should study

it as an invaluable introduction to the volume of inspired truth; the humble Christian to obtain elevated views of God; the philosopher, to see how little the human mind can accomplish on the most important of all subjects without the aid of revelation; the child of sorrow, to learn the lessons of patient submission; the man of science, to know what was understood in the far distant periods of the past; the man of taste, as an incomparable specimen of poetic beauty and sublimity. It will teach invaluable lessons to each advancing generation, and to the end of time, true piety and taste will find consolation and pleasure in the study of the Book of Job."

Amongst many other helpful passages from this great mine of wisdom, how often there has come to the child of God, perturbed by doubt or driven to despair the expression, "I would not live alway" (Chap. vii, 16), and the exclamation, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" (Chap. xxiii, 3). Yet with absolute trust in the Loving Father and humble reliance upon His paternal mercy, the longing heart is able to look confidently to Him and say with fervor, "He knoweth the way I take," (Chap. xxiii, 10), then rising upon the pinions of faith give vent to the certain hope of the Christian, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," (Chap. xix, 25). When

the Grim Messenger invades the peaceful domestic life, in imitation of the noble old Patriarch, how comforting to realize his beautiful faith when he uttered the words so well known and oft repeated, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," (Chap. i. 21), until resting upon the omniscience of the Great Builder of worlds, starry clusters, life and character, the triumphant believer is able to say "Though He slay me yet will I trust him." (Chap. xiii, 15).

As J. F. Genung has expresesd it, to gather the history before us into a sence: "There is a service of God which is not work for reward; it is a heart loyalty, a hunger after God's presence, which survives loss and chastisement, which in spite of contradictory seeming, cleaves to what is God-like as the needle seeks the pole, and which reaches up out of the darkness and hardness of this life to the light and love beyond. This Book is ours, all men's; the thankful world will always care for it reverently, for it will never cease to be young. And as we look back toward its origin, we shall be glad to cherish this our priceless heritage, not in the narrow human copyright due to name or definite date, but as beholding therein a large divine idea, shaping itself out of the nebulous confusion of a far distant period

and orbing into a perfect star in whose unchanging light we, with the Patriarchs, may walk."

To Him who inspired and enabled my mind and heart to study this wonderful Book I devote these imperfectly written pages, trusting that the perusal of them may be helpful to others, as they have been profitable and pleasant to my own soul.

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Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: June 2005

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